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Pers: Clark, Joseph W.

Pers: Kaufmann, William W.

Pers: Rostow, W. W.

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Page Page Page

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Four Books On Our Government, Its Workings And Personalities

CONGRESS: THE SAPLESS BRANCH, by Joseph S. Clark (Harper & Row, \$4.95).

THE McNAMARA STRATEGY, by William W. Kaufmann (Harper & Row, \$5.95).

VIEW FROM THE SEVENTH FLOOR, by W. W. Rostow (Harper & Row, \$4).

THE INVISIBLE GOVERNMENT, by David Wise and Thomas B. Ross (Random House, \$5.95).

Summertime is usually reserved for light reading. But 1964 is an election year and publishers (notably Harper & Row) have gone out of their way to get out books concerned with the workings of the national government and with the political personalities involved. Four of these books have preoccupied me this summer. To be sure, they are not of equal import or significance, but each in its own way sheds light on some facet of our federal political structure. And just to keep the record straight at the onset, Senator Goldwater does not figure at all in two of them and receives only perfunctory mention in the others.

Considering the first of these volumes, not necessarily in order of merit, Senator Joseph S. Clark's cleverly titled, "Congress: the Sapless Branch," deals with the malaise, or even worse yet, the inadequacy of the Congress of the United States as a legislative body and with it the danger that such portends for the very democratic process. Clark, a liberal Democrat from Pennsylvania, has been an outspoken critic of the Senate "Establishment," an inner group of political oligarchs who have specialized in legislative obstructionism for reasons that have little or nothing to do with the national welfare.

For the most part, these senatorial oligarchs, coming from the South and Middle West and more often than not conservative if not reactionary in their political orientation, reflect the less enlightened attitudes of their sections. Many represent virtually rotten borough constituencies (Eastland and Stennis of

Mississippi come most readily to mind), although this situation will undoubtedly change due to the recent Supreme Court decisions on legislative apportionment. But in any event, they tend to be re-elected year in and year out with little or no meaningful opposition. Consequently, they obtain important positions on Senate and House committees which specialize in strangling legislation, particularly that which affects urban constituencies. Paradoxically, at a time when the nation has become, and is becoming, more and more urbanized, the Congressional rulers have blithely ignored the pressing social and economic problems of the cities.

No easy way exists for getting rid of the obstructionists in Congress. But Senator Clark contends that there are ways of overcoming the kind of Congressional obstructionism that is built into the organization and the operation of the Congress. He advocates the following: elimination of the filibuster in the Senate and limiting the power of the Rules Committee in the House; voting on all presidential proposals within six months of their submission to the Congress; committing Congressmen to support the policies advocated by their national party organizations; getting rid of political patronage; changes in the means of election financing so that candidates will not be beholden to big contributors; establishing four year terms for Senators and Representatives with elections held only in presidential years; and public disclosure of the sources of income for all members of Congress.

The second book, "The McNamara Strategy," by William W. Kaufmann, former faculty member at Yale and currently professor of political science at MIT, is a careful and sympathetic analysis of the policies of Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara. He advocates the following: elimination of the filibuster in the Senate and limiting the power of the Rules Committee in the House; voting on all presidential proposals within six months of their submission to the Congress; committing Congressmen to support the policies advocated by their national party organizations; getting rid of political patronage; changes in the means of election financing so that candidates will not be beholden to big contributors; establishing four year terms for Senators and Representatives with elections held only in presidential years; and public disclosure of the sources of income for all members of Congress.

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